

VZCZCXYZ0013
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHAB #0063/01 0281702
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 281702Z JAN 08
FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3949
INFO RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC 0039

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABIDJAN 000063

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/W-EPLUMB AND INR/AA-BGRAVES

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/26/2018
TAGS: [MARR](#) [MCAP](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [IV](#)
SUBJECT: UNOCI CONCERNED ABOUT DDR PROCESS

REF: ABIDJAN 08

Classified By: Political/Economic Section Chief Silvia Eiriz for reasons 1.4(b/d).

¶1. (C) Jean Marc Tafani, the new chief of the United Nations Operation in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI) Office of Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) described the government's DDR plan as ambitious and fragile and noted it could increase instability. Tafani expressed concern about lack of coordination and duplication of efforts within the government on the DDR process. He stated that the Forces Nouvelles (FN) and the government armed forces have separate DDR timetables. The government armed forces announced the completion of DDR on January 24 while the FN are scheduled to finish on April 1. Having 5,000 FN troops join the government armed forces, as planned, will have serious budgetary implications on an institution already experiencing financial difficulties, Tafani said. Gianmarco Scuppa, head of the European Commission (EC) delegation's Political Section, said the EC will not fund the DDR program as currently constituted, but will observe the process for another 2 months, and will then propose a different approach if it observes no concrete results. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) Jean Marc Tafani, the new chief of UNOCI's DDR Office, provided an update on the status of DDR on January 24 to representatives of diplomatic missions, international organizations, and civil society. Tafani stated that the disarmament and demobilization process launched on December 22 was supposed to include regrouping, disarmament, profiling of ex-combatants, and demobilization. Tafani described the DDR events of December 22 as purely ceremonial (See Reftel).

¶3. (C) Tafani described the government's DDR plan as ambitious and fragile and noted it could increase the risk factors for instability rather than strengthen peace. Tafani advised that the FN and the government armed forces now have 2 separate DDR timetables. The government armed forces officially completed the DDR process, which involved 12,000 combatants, on January 24. The Forces Nouvelles is carrying out a separate DDR process, which involves 37,500 combatants, and which is scheduled to be completed on April 1. Of the 37,500 FN combatants, 20,000 are to go into the civic service, 5,000 will be integrated into the government armed forces, 4,000 will be integrated into the government gendarmerie force, and 8,500 will go through a program for reinsertion into civil society.

¶4. (C) Tafani advised that Chief of Staff of the FN General Soumaila Bakayoko is currently traveling to meet with FN Zone Commanders to explain how DDR will be carried out. Tafani said he believes the FN have a real desire to disarm and take up some other employment, but are not very interested in participating in a reinsertion program. Scuppa stated it could be difficult to get the Zone Commanders to buy into the

plan. Tafani added that they won't accept it unless they receive financial enticement to do so. Scuppa remarked that the EC will not fund the DDR program as currently constituted. He said the EC will observe the process for another 2 months and, if there are no concrete results, the EC will propose a different DDR approach.

¶15. (C) Tafani expressed concern about lack of coordination and duplication of effort within the government on the DDR process. The Ministry of Defense, through the Integrated Command Center (ICC), is in charge of disarmament. Tafani said the ICC lacks the budget and planning officers necessary to carry out its mission. Both the ICC and the National Program of Reinsertion and Community Rehabilitation (Programme National de Reinsertion et de Rehabilitation Communautaire - PNRRRC), which reports to the Prime Minister, are responsible for demobilization. Reintegration is to be carried out both through the PNRRRC and the civic service. Tafani said the government was unable to provide details about the civic service and PNRRRC programs.

¶16. (SBU) Tafani also expressed concern about the implications on the government's budget of having 5,000 FN troops join the government armed forces. He noted that the armed forces are experiencing budgetary difficulties and that this will have an affect on morale. Tafani said government soldiers have not been paid salaries for 3 months, but Scuppa clarified that the delay only applied to the war bonuses and not the base salaries.

¶17. (C) Comment. Tafani is correct that the fragility of the DDR plan could increase tensions. First of all, there are the differing DDR timetables for the government armed forces and the FN. This could be portrayed by parties wanting to cause trouble as the FN dragging its feet on disarmament. The government's plan lacks detail and also seems to lack adequate financing. If these weaknesses impede momentum on DDR, citizens' concerns about the ability to organize elections that will be safe and free of violence will increase. While President Gbagbo publicly calls for elections in 2008, there are rumors that he is working behind the scenes to delay the election. If DDR has not taken place, Gbagbo could argue that there is still too much instability and concerns of violence to allow holding of elections. End Comment.
AKUETTEH